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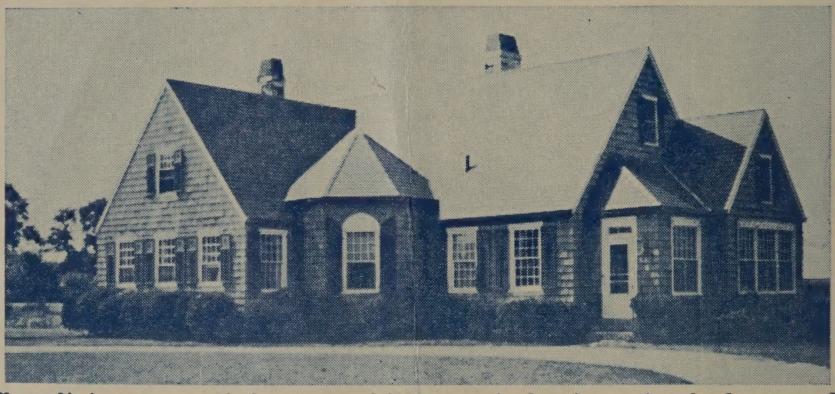

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THE CAPE PLAYBILL

Vol. 11 No. 5 **Week of August 3, 1959**

The Cape Playbill furnishes weekly programs for the Cape Playhouse, Dennis, Mass., The Falmouth Playhouse, Coonamessett, Mass., and the Cape Cod Melody Tent, Hyannis, Mass. It is published weekly during the summer theatre season by the Cape Playbill at Kendall Printing Company, Falmouth, Mass. Advertising rates furnished upon request. Please address all inquiries to Box 887, Falmouth, Mass.

THE SUMMER CRITIC

by Margaret W. Perkins
Drama Critic for the FALMOUTH ENTERPRISE

Years and years ago, when we were newly fledged and summer theatres were younger, too, we were sent by a dear, departed editor to review a straw hat production of, if memory serves, a play called "The Shining Hour."

We were fresh from college drama courses whose instructors had bid us remember that a play must draw a valid conclusion; that it might deal with an immoral situation, but its resolution must be ethically, yea, morally sound. We were, moreover, still ashine with the doctrines of Stanislavsky and the Moscow Art Theatre, and although it is hard at this remove of time, to reconstruct the inflexible idealism which motivated our reaction, we undoubtedly saw ourself as the saviour of the American theatre in five hundred words.

The result, of course, was a blistering, bad-tempered phillipic. Our editor was more broad-minded than we; he printed the thing verbatim.

In the quarter of a century since, we have acquired a veneer of tranquility; we no longer give our editor's request for a criticism the literal interpretation of tearing to shreds. Instead we feel that we have been asked to evaluate as honestly, as unemotionally as possible, whatever a Monday night produces in the way of theatrical diversion. We seldom go off the deep end any more.

Our tolerance, we admit, is largely the result of just getting older; our mind is too stiff for the fine, showy acrobatics of its youth. Partly, however, we find that our evaluation has acquired flexibility as the concept of summer theatre has changed.

As we review the years since Raymond Moore, that crazy young man, first decided to invest the Cape Cod sand dunes with stars from a firmament more unfamiliar than our own sky above, we realize how tremendous that change has been.

Dangerous as it is to impute to those no longer living, who can neither agree or deny our implications, we nevertheless suggest that the pioneers in summer theatre must have been imbued with somewhat the same ideals that motivated our own corrosive critique. They must have had about them the same changing virtues and high courage of all new ventures. Certainly they were finding their way in a brand-new medium.

We know almost certainly that Eugene O'Neill and Susan Glaspell and those others at Provincetown made a definite contribution to drama. The Jitney Players, who toured the hinterlands, and Raymond Moore down here, both wrought incalculable changes in the larger world of the theatre.

Summer theatre has now grown up. It is no longer the rickety, gawky child playing at make-believe in an old barn, but an adult concerned with such unimaginative details

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as keeping up appearances and balancing the budget. Here and there, of course, we still find an adolescent group struggling to invest an abandoned meeting house with firefly glamor, but the era when they might have been effective has vanished and they seem, sadly, only cases of arrested development not precocious experimenters as they did a generation ago. There is some other field waiting to be mowed, but this one is clipped and hedged.

We say vanished era and perhaps thus dignify what was originally no more than expediency. However that may be, summer theatre is now big business with all the privileges, emoluments, and taboos appertaining thereto. As a critic we need no longer feel called upon to save the American theatre, but if we are absolved from that responsibility which, in our youthful zeal, provoked invective, we still have an obligation to discharge.

True, we are not a critic at all. The plays we see on Monday nights have long since survived the analyst's knife. It is not for us to say that Noel Coward's "Hay Fever" is flimsy; for it is tinsel and gauze which has outlived good productions and bad and the judgment of critics less provincial than we.

Once during a season we may attend at the birth of a new play. Then we have not only the right, but, in a way, the responsibility to criticise and to judge. That our opinion has never, by one jot or title or one bat of a false eyelash, swayed the decision of those who really shape the theatre matters not at all. We still rise to the challenge as an old fire horse rears and plunges at the smell of smoke.

We acknowledge that there is still a niche, too, for "Art for Art's sake," but only when the attempt is honest, not when it is a cloak for mediocrity or opportunism.

If we who ride the summer circuit have at last relinquished the heady joy of shaping dramatic art; if at last we distinguish between honest endeavor, be it professional or amateur, and gimcrackery, we have instead learned how to enjoy ourselves uncritically.

Summer theatre is big business, but by the same token, it is thoroughly professional, competently staged, and like all good theatre, completely evocative.

If the straw hat theatre of a generation vanished had the wild, undisciplined charm of all young things, today's may boast the sure beauty of maturity. We have exchanged the bright, cutting blade of criticism, for a better tool.

Our editor, long ago when we were bright and foolish, tried to tell us when he said that honesty need not be cruel. We see what he meant. If it is an honest production, honestly done, it has earned an honest opinion; or have we compromised our virtue if we had a good time. Honest enjoyment is, after all, a criterion, too.

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One of the greatest actresses of our day, Miss Shirley Booth, who has won the acclaim of drama critics and theatregoers alike, will make her sixth appearance before Cape Playhouse audiences in next week's production of Andre Roussin's brilliant comedy, "Nina."

Miss Booth appeared here for the first time in 1955 in the famed Shirley Booth Festival, during which time she appeared in "The Vinegar Tree," "The Time of the Cuckoo," "My Sister Eileen," and "Come Back, Little Sheba." Last year she opened the 1958 Cape Playhouse season in Noel Coward's "Hay Fever."

"Nina," is an impudent French comedy whose plot centers around the Gallic approach to the problem of the eternal triangle. In it, Miss Booth plays a wife who successfully divides her time—and affections—between her unsuspecting husband and her young lover. When her husband discovers her deception, he goes to the lover's apartment, and there follows a series of typically zany farcical situations.

The supporting cast will include Douglas Watson (who also appeared with Miss Booth in "The Time of the Cuckoo"), Leo Lucker, and Ted Wilkins. The production has been staged by Charles Bowden and designed by Herbert Senn of the Playhouse staff. Performances are nightly at 8:30 (except Sunday), with Matinees on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons at 2:30. For reservations, phone Dennis 60 or 185.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Howard Teichmann is one of the few contemporary playwrights concerned with satire. Born in Chicago, he did his undergraduate work at the University of Wisconsin in journalism. He did his graduate study in history. But somehow, and Mr Teichmann cannot answer the "why" at this point, Howard Teichmann arrived one fine day in New York and he was soon working with the Mercury Theatre —which means he was working with Orson Welles and John Houseman. Mr. Teichmann progressed famously, and fast, with The Mercury. He became the stage manager. He says he can see it all now: It was because he was the only one who didn't want to act. When the Mercury Theatre went on the air, Howard Teichmann went with it as a writer. And thus he became a radio writer. And, as he says, he wrote "plenty of it." That plenty included the Helen Hayes Theatre, The Campbell Playhouse and the Ford Theatre. He wrote the very first television Spectacular, that two-hour one so Gargantuan it was on both NBC and CBS and starred Mary Martin and Ethel Merman. A couple of years ago, Mr. Teichmann, fortunately for all concerned got together with George S. Kaufman and between them they wrote "The Solid Gold Cadillac," a satire of big business in Washington, in which the late Josephine Hull was so memorable on-stage and Judy Holliday was so delightful on the screen. More recently Mr. Teichmann wrote "Miss Lonelyhearts," based on the novel by Nathaniel West. It's now being made into a film by Dore Schary, starring Montgomery Clift, Robert Ryan, Myrna Loy and Maureen Stapleton. The senior editor of the OWI Overseas Branch during the war was Howard Teichmann. Incidentally he's the "man you always hear about," for he married his college sweetheart, he's very muchly still married to her, and daughter Judy Teichmann is now sixteen. With all this Mr. Teichmann has been an assistant professor in the Department of English, Barnard College, Columbia University— and he has seldom missed a class. Well —hardly ever.

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Andreadis points out that where formerly one might find 300 misses dresses, they will now find 2,000; 1,000 Bermuda shorts where there were only 150 before; 1,000 sweaters, 300 children's dresses; 600 skirts.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Cape Playhouse wishes to express its sincere appreciation for furnishings and incidental properties: Lichti's, Dennis; Windswept Antiques, East Dennis; Yarmouth Greenhouse, Yarmouth.

The author wishes to express warmest thanks to Helen Worden Erskine for her authoritative inquiries into the background material of this play.

Advance Director ..... Elizabeth Caldwell

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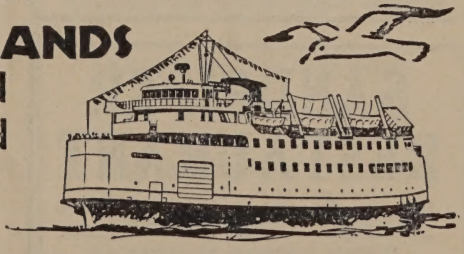

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

(In order of appearance)

Mimsy	**ANN B. DAVIS**
Aunt Hettie	**FAY BAINTER**
Old Jim	**SKEDGE MILLER**
Ryan, of the Daily News	**WINSTON MAY**
Pusey	**GAYLORD MASON**
Miss Freud	**SUE LAWLESS**
Winthrop Allen	**LAWRENCE FLETCHER**
Summers, of the Herald Tribune	**PETER SACCIO**
Johnson, of the Journal American	**MICHAEL NIXON**
Rosenthal, of the New York Post	**WILLIAM RHEAD**
Francis X. Nella	**LAWRENCE FLETCHER**
Aubrey McKittridge	**RONALD DURLING**

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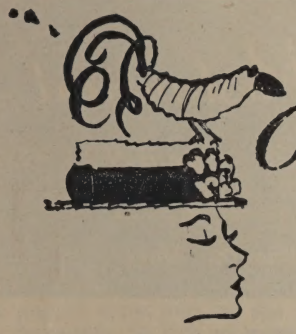

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SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

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ACT I

Scene 1 Noon, April 2nd
Scene 2 A few minutes later

ACT II

Scene 1 One minute later
Scene 2 Morning, April 3rd
Scene 3 Evening

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a very nice day in the mid of summer and all through the house, not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse. . . They were all at the beach, natch, except Mom, and she was playing it smart at the Christmas Tree Gift Shops getting all of her gift shopping done . . . How about you?

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FAY BAINTER (Aunt Hettie) has been extremely active in the theatre of late. Last season, she won many bravos for her beautiful performance of the mother in Eugene O'Neill's "Long Day's Journey Into Night" on tour. Since then, she has appeared in a new play entitled "A Swim in the Sea," "Look Homeward, Angel" at the San Juan, Puerto Rico, Drama Festival, and "The Girls in 509" at the Royal Poinciana Playhouse in Palm Beach, Florida. Film-goers will recall her Academy Award winning performance in "Jezebel," as well as in "Quality Street," "Bill of Divorcement," "The Virginian," "Our Town," "The Human Comedy," "Young Tom Edison," "The Kid from Brooklyn," "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty," "State Fair," "June Bride" and many others. Miss Bainter is also very much at home in front of radio's microphones and television's cameras.

Miss Bainter was born in Los Angeles, California. During the forty years of her association with the theatrical world, Miss Bainter has compiled an amazing number of credits to her name. Her first appearance while she was still quite young was with the Belasco stock company in Los Angeles. Shortly after, Miss Bainter made her New York debut in "The Rose of Panama" in the role of Celine Marinter. After several New York appearances, Miss Bainter joined a stock company in Albany where she successfully played a wide variety of roles, including "Stop Theif;" "The Temperamental Journey"; "The Seven Sisters"; "Baby Mine"; and "Fine Feathers," to mention a few. From Albany, Miss Bainter travelled to Des Moines, and Toledo, where she was given leading roles in "Within the Law," "Seven Keys to Baldpate" and "Madam Sherry." Miss Bainter was then called back to New York to create the role of Ruth Sherwood in "Arms and the Girl." This play led to a long series of leading roles in New York, where Miss Bainter's versatility as an actress of comedy, drama and stylized period plays was evidenced. Among the many roles she brought to life were: Ming Toy in "East is West," Rose Coe in "The Other Rose," Louise in "The Two Orphans,' Kate Hardcastle in the popular eighteenth century comedy, "She Stoops To Conquer," Mrs. Sullen in the late Restoration comedy, "The Beau Stratagem," Mrs. Millimant in Congreve's memorable "The Way of the World," Lady Mary Lasenby in James Barrie's delightful "The Admirable Crichton," Mrs. Selby Clive in "The Man Who Changed His Name," Julia in "Fallen Angels," Ilsa von

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Ilsen in "Caprice," Kalonika in "Lysistrata," Louise Morel in "The Perfect Marriage," Eva Ardsly in "For Services Rendered," and the role of Topsy in "Uncle Tom's Cabin." "Gay Divorcee," Fran Dodsworth in the stage version of "Dodsworth," and Marcia Williams in "The Lambent Flame" are several more of the long list of plays to which Miss Bainter has contributed her talents.

ANN B. DAVIS (Mimsy) Show business became Ann Davis' lifeblood at the early age of six when she earned two dollars in a puppet show and, as she puts it, "I was impossible to live with for weeks."

A career as an actress, at this point, was shelved temporarily while Ann continued the necessary search for education, but when she arrived at the University of Michigan to study medicine the theatrical die was truly cast.

Her glamorous glimpse "inside show business" was furnished by her brother, Evans, who had danced in "High Button Shoes," "On The Town," "Call Me Madame" and was lead dancer in the national company of "Oklahoma!" for over a year.

"The people, places and theatres he introduced me to made it perfectly obvious that The Theatre, in quotes, was the place for me," Ann says. "I threw caution to the winds and graduated from the Speech and Drama department."

Then followed approximately six years of little theatres, stock companies, touring musicals and the like before she got her big Hollywood break as Bob Cummings' secretary, Schultzy, on his NBC-TV "The Bob Cummings Show."

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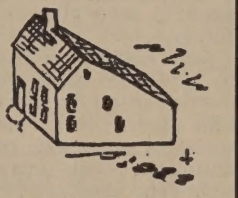
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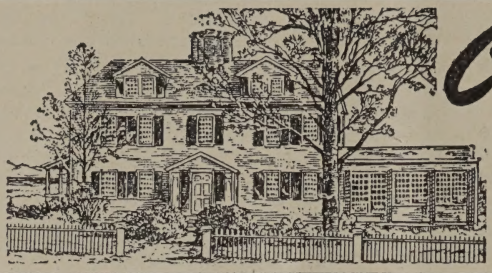

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She spent a summer at the Cain Park Theatre in Cleveland and a year at the Erie Playhouse at Erie, Pa. Under Director Newell Tarrant at the latter theatre she got a solid start, learning every angle of production and playing dozens of varied roles ranging from a teen ager to characters of 60. She spent 16 weeks with a touring company, made $20 a week, managed to save $100 and headed for California.

Ann arrived in Porterville, California, in 1949 and spent three years with the Barn Theater, a proving ground for her. She played every part imaginable in a series of one-night stands. After moving down the California coast to Monterey where she appeared at the Wharf Theater, Ann decided to seek her fame in Hollywood. It was almost two years before she got her "break", signing with Bob Cummings. At the time Ann was singing in a revue at the "Cabaret Concertheater", an off-Broadway type spot on Sunset Boulevard. Paul Henning, the writer-producer of the Cummings Show, was just creating the show and needed a girl for Bob's secretary. He originally thought of a dumb-blonde type as "Schultzy", but when he saw Ann at the Cabaret show he signed her that night.

This year Ann is in her fourth year on the show, and has made the part of "Schultzy" so wonderfully her own that last Spring she received an "Emmy" award for her characterization.

Ann was born in Schenectady, New York and raised in Erie, Pa. She had a momentary appearance in one film, "Strategic Air Command," and plays Ruby Coleman in "A Man Called Peter."

On the stage she has played such parts as Miriam in "The Women," Mrs. Yoder in "Papa Is All," Aunt Jenny and Aunt Sigrid in "I Remember Mama," Maria in "Twelfth Night," Doto in "A Phoenix Too Frequent" and Ma Allen in "Dark of the Moon."

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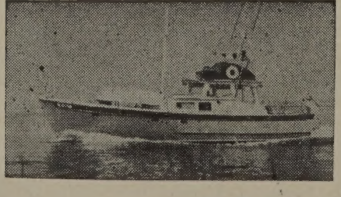

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Last summer Ann toured the strawhat circuit in "The Matchmaker" and won rave notices as well as sold-out houses everywhere she played. She loves the legitimate stage and returns to it whenever her TV chores allow.

SKEDGE MILLER (Old Jim) Mr. Miller played Sir Andrew, that delightful fop, in "Twelfth Night" for the New York Shakespeare Festival's production in Central Park last summer. Subsequently he had the comedy lead in "She Shall Have Music," the musical version of "The Country Wife," which was praised by the critics as the "My Fair Lady" of off-Broadway. Mr. Miller's initial appearance on the main stem was in a revival of "Our Town." He has also been seen with Cyril Ritchard in "The Relapse" and Betsy Palmer and Dennis King in "Affair of Honor." He has been a mainstay of leading summer theatres such as Skowhegan, Stockbridge and the Playhouse-in-the-Park in Philadelphia.

LAWRENCE FLETCHER (Winthrop Allen and Francis X. Nella) is making his his third appearance at the Cape Playhouse having appeared here in 1956 with Henry Fonda in "The Male Animal" and again last season in "Dulcy starring Dody Goodman. Mr. Fletcher portrayed Al Smith, New York's colorful governer during the 20's with the national company of "Sunrise at Campobello" this season. Broadway theatregoers have seen him in such memorable presentations as "Another Language," "Boy Meets Girl," "Sailor Beware," the Orson Welles "Julius Caesar" and "Mister Johnson." His most recent foray into motion pictures was "The Search for Bridey Murphy." On television, Mr. Fletcher is a frequent participant on Sergeant Bilko with Phil Silvers. For the dramatic programs, he has appeared of late on the U.S. Steel Hour and that memorable travesty of Hollywood on Omnibus,, "Malice in Wonderland" by S. J. Perelman.

GAYLORD MASON (Pusey) made his Broadway debut in Kaufman and Hart's "The American Way." Since then he has appeared with Cornelia Otis Skinner in "Theatre," as Tom Beecher opposite Helen Hayes in "Harriet," "Kiss and Tell" and "Uncle Willie" with Menasha Skulnik. In addition, Mr. Mason has toured in "The Hasty Heart" and with the Avon Shakespearean Company. He scored a parti-

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cular success as Barney, the canefield Casanova, in the Australian play "Summer of the 17th Doll," when it was produced to great critical acclaim last year at Arena Stage in Washington, D. C.

RONALD DURLING (McKittridge) received his first theatre experience in Hollywood, where he went to study with the great Michael Chekov. While there, he produced and directed shows for Preston Sturges at his famous Players Theatre.

After a lengthy concert tour of dramatic works, Mr. Durling returned to his home town, New York, to continue his stage career and study with Stella Adler. In between off-Broadway acting jobs he appeared in his first film, "The Seven Year Itch", starring Marilyn Monroe.

Four students from the **American Theatre Wing—Cape Playhouse Professional Training Center** are being presented in tonight's performance of "The Girls in 509."

Miss Sue Lawless, who made her first Cape Playhouse appearance this year in "Howie," and later appeared in the Center's production of "Glass Menagerie," will be seen in the role of Miss Freud. The three reporters will be portrayed by Winston May, Michael Nixon and Peter Saccio.

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The Training Center is under the direction of Dr. Frank C. Davidson. The students have been chosen for outstanding abilities and promise of successful stage careers by a distinguished committee in New York, comprising of Miss Lillian Gish, Miss Cornelia Otis Skinner, Mr. Guthrie McClintic, Mr. Alfred deLiagre, Jr., Mr. Vinton Freedly and Mr. Charles Mooney.

This unique project in theatre education is being financed by the Raymond Moore Foundation and by individual contributors.

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A non-profit corporation for educational and charitable purposes, chartered by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in 1948, and organized pursuant to the will of the late Raymond Moore who founded the Playhouse in 1927.

The Cape Playhouse previously controlled by the Raymond Moore Foundation is now wholly owned by the Foundation and is being operated solely for the benefit of the public and for the theatre education. The Foundation also owns the Cape Cinema, the Cape Playhouse Restaurant and the Art Center, in which the American Theatre Wing—Cape Playhouse Professional Training Center is located.

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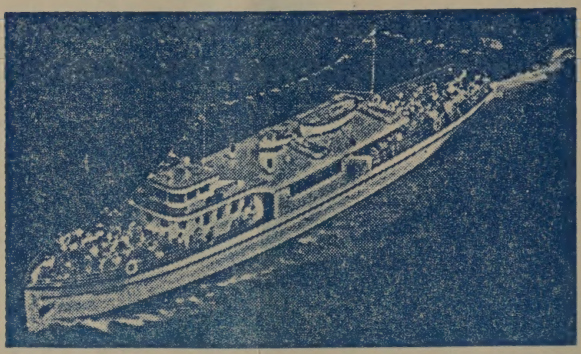

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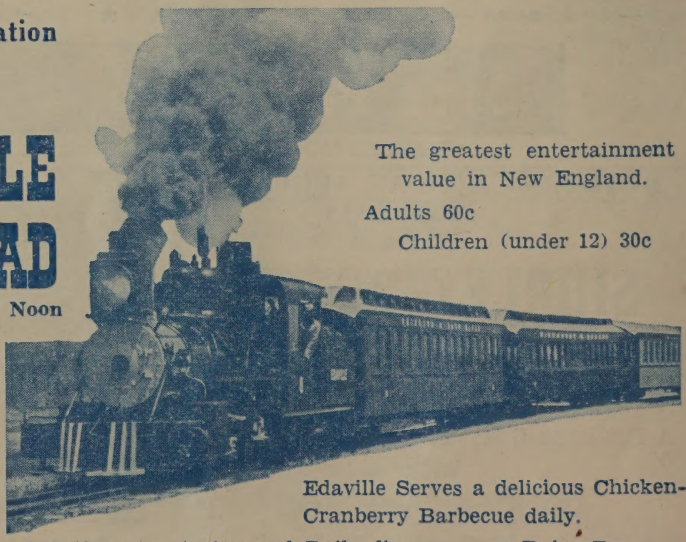

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